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PREPARING ENGLISH TEACHERS ABROAD--THE NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKER AND THE NON-NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKER.

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THE COUNTRIES REPRESENTED AT THE TENTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF LINGUISTICS AT BUCHAREST AND THE SIXTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF PHONETIC SCIENCES AT PRAGUE WERE WIDELY VARIED IDEALOGICALLY, BUT THE MAJORITY OF THE PAPERS PRESENTED AT THESE 1967 CONFERENCES WERE IN A COMMON LANGUAGE--ENGLISH. WHILE THE PAPERS REFLECTED LITTLE CONCERN ABOUT THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE, A FEW INDICATED AN AWARENESS OF CERTAIN ASPECTS OF LANGUAGE BEHAVIOR THAT HAVE A BEARING ON LANGUAGE TEACHING AND THE TRAINING OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE. THE POTENTIAL MARKET FOR THIS TRAINING IS VAST--THERE ARE, FOR INSTANCE, MORE THAN 66,000 OFFICIALLY DESIGNATED NON-NATIVE-SPEAKING ENGLISH TEACHERS IN JAPAN ALONE, AND APPROXIMATELY 45 MILLION STUDENTS OF ENGLISH IN RUSSIAN SCHOOLS. THE SITUATIONS IN WHICH ENGLISH IS TAUGHT ARE LARGELY MULTI-LINGUAL AND NECESSITATE SPECIAL TRAINING. SUCH TRAINING MUST DEVELOP (1) ATTITUDES THAT WILL AID IN CROSS-CULTURE AND INTER-GROUP COMMUNICATION, (2) UNDERSTANDING OF THE PURPOSES AND COMPLEXITIES OF COMMUNICATION, (3) SKILLS TO FIND AND USE CONTRASTIVE AND SOCIO-LINGUISTIC ANALYSES, AND TO SELECT AND TEACH MATERIALS APPROPRIATE FOR MULTI-LINGUAL SITUATIONS, AND (4) HABITS OF OBSERVING AND UTILIZING CROSS-CULTURE INTERACTION. THIS PAPER WAS PRESENTED AT THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH CONFERENCE, NOVEMBER 1967, HONOLULU, HAWAII. (AMM)

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PREPARING ENGLISH TEACHERS ABROAD: THE NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKER AND THE NON-NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKER

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To be presented at the 57th annual meeting of the NCTE at Honolulu, Hawaii, Program B 18: Teacher Education for Multi-Lingual Communities.

Standing before you in this multi-lingual community but mono-lingual/cross-culture-interaction-situation I am vividly reminded of my recent participation at the Tenth International Congress of Linguists at Bucharest and the Sixth International Congress of Phonetic Sciences at Prague. The crowds there were not as massive as here and you heard a greater variety of European languages in the corridors and hotel rooms. But the overall impact on a native speaker of English was about the same as it is here.

Despite the fact that those congresses were labeled international, just as the present one is labeled national, English was about as ubiquitous there as it is here and its speakers were about as varied in pronunciation, facial expression, body movement, and dress as they are here.

Even in their underlying aims the participants in the two European congresses seemed to approach the spirit reflected here--a desire to seek out ways of equipping the persons we are professionally responsible for to improve communication in a world where we are now as likely to hear and see on our communications media explosions, flames, screams and threats as friendly words reconciling differing points of view.

As to how this desire can most effectively be realized, however, the participants in this convention and particularly you here before me this afternoon probably have views somewhat different from those the participants in the European congresses had. Most of you would probably accept the proposition that making competence in the use of English as universal as possible is the best course we can pursue to bring about effective communication and harmonious interaction among the peoples of the world. The majority of the participants of the European congresses would probably not subscribe to that proposition or even to the proposition that they should pursue such a goal.

A look at the titles of the thousand or so papers presented at the two congresses shows how human beings, including linguists, enjoy seeking answers to intricate questions that have little obvious bearing on problems of common concern. The abundance of papers like that presented by one of our best known TESLs, Professor Charles C. Fries, "The 'Time' Depth of Coexisting Conflicting Grammatical Signals in English",--a searching examination of the differing rates of change of different structures in English--shows that linguists at congresses often tune out pleas for guidance from persons like yourselves who have the responsibility of bringing about competence in cross-culture communication.

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A curious thing at the congress in Bucharest was my coming across, in one participant's folder I picked up by mistake, an appeal in English on a fly-leaf by a committee of the Viet Cong to "the Linguists of the World" to condemn the American government for killing Vietnamese women and children. Remarkably enough, considering that this happened in a communist country, I could not find another copy of this appeal nor did I hear a single reference to it or to the Vietnam conflict in any of the sessions I attended--even though the linguists from the communist countries outnumbered those from the non-communist world.

Those who fear that making all mankind competent in English would automatically give the English-speaking countries control over the rest of the world can feel reassured from this occasion. It shows that English can be used as effectively to attack the English-speaking countries as to cooperate with them. Others who hesitate to give competence in English to all lest it expose the English-speaking peoples to wholesale demands and slanders can also feel reassured. This occasion illustrates that unless a message has a receiver disposed to respond no communication occurs. Since there was apparently no readiness in the receivers of the message from the Viet Cong to respond, despite the fact that the code used was familiar to most of the participants at the congress, it landed with a thud.

From what I have said thus far you may feel that the European congresses sounded a death knell for the teaching of English to non-native speakers abroad. I hasten to say that I intend to make exactly the opposite point. Even though the contents of a large proportion of the papers presented at these congresses reflected little concern about the teaching of English as a second language, the communication behavior or medium used at the congresses conveyed a message that was not lost on linguists or on people in general and should not be lost on teachers of English as a second language. Most emphatically expressed by the congresses is the familiar message that English outstrips all other language behavior from the standpoint of the extent, the diversity, and the reinforcing power of the responses it elicits. Of the 598 papers summarized in the Abstracts published by the Planning Committee of the Congress of Linguists at Bucharest 235 of them were presented in English. The rest were presented in French (144), in Russian (123), in German (78), in Spanish (12), and in Italian (6). Of 373 papers similarly abstracted for the Phonetics Congress in Prague, 169 were presented in English and the rest were divided among Russian (74), German (73), French (50) and Czech (2).

Furthermore, looking at the nationalities of the speakers you find that a large proportion of those using English were from non-English-speaking countries--some of them from countries like France, Germany, and Russia whose languages were in substantial use at the congresses.

If direct concern with the problems of language teaching was not manifest in the majority of the papers delivered at the congresses there was nevertheless indication in a few of an awareness of certain aspects of language behavior that have a bearing on language teaching and must then of course be reflected in the training of teachers of English as a second language for the era of the seventies.

The establishment within one year of two large organizations of international character for the purpose of helping teachers of English as a second language everywhere meet the demands made upon them and even go beyond them suggests that the teachers and trainers of teachers in this field have come to feel that the gap between our theoretical knowledge, technological know-how, and classroom needs must be bridged more quickly than ever before.

An interesting fact that probably has not occurred to many persons in NCTE is that TESOL with its headquarters in Washington and the newly established Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language in London could under the right circumstances gain a membership almost overnight that would make the NCTE with its 100,000-plus membership look like a pygmy. With John A. Brownell in Japan's Second Language[1/] pointing out that in Japan's public schools alone there are more than 66,000 officially designated non-native-speaking English teachers and with Soviet educators indicating that some 45,000,000 students are studying English in the Russian schools it is safe to say, even without the help of a computer, that there are probably as many persons in the world identifying themselves as teachers of English to non-native-speakers as there are identifying themselves as English teachers for native speakers. Also, since the major problems they all face are easy to identify and fairly similar--at least for those dealing with beginning and intermediate level students--these teachers would be bound to have a group cohesiveness stronger than that which prevails among teachers of the language arts in English-speaking countries. A glance at the NCTE convention program and the reading of the two books resulting from last year's Anglo-American Seminar on the teaching of English held at Dartmouth College The Uses of English by Herbert Muller and Growth Through English by John Dixon will quickly establish how amorphous a species, despite their being rooted in a so-called common culture, teachers of English to native speakers actually are.

Having suggested how vast the potential market for the training of teachers of English for non-native speakers is let us address ourselves to the problems of training them for work in multi-lingual communities. First we must note that one of the consequences of the social upheavals, the mass migrations, the speeding-up of transportation and communications of recent times is that there are few places where English is taught that cannot be classed as multi-lingual communities. Indeed, our increasing social problems, if not our increasing linguistic sophistication, are impelling us to consider even such urban centers of the American heartland as Detroit, Chicago and Milwaukee multi-lingual communities.

But socio-linguistic research of recent years teaches us that the multi-lingualism of one locale can be a vastly different thing in terms of the behavior it exacts from that of another. Research in Hawaii, for example, like that reported at Bucharest by Gloria Glissmeyer in her paper, "Progress on Analysis of English Idiolects Keaukaha, Hilo, Hawaii," and by L.S. Harms in his paper, "Social Dialects and Speech Communication Proficiency," suggests that the problems of using English for cross-culture and inter-group communication in Hawaii are somewhat different from what they are in New York or in the Philippines or in the Trust Territories.

If our increasing awareness of the complexity of the problem of bringing about communication in a multi-lingual community impels us to maintain that teachers of English to non-native speakers in one locale must be prepared to cope with problems different from those of another are there no indispensible elements in the training of such teachers? I would like to suggest that a good way to identify such elements would be in terms of how they contribute to the shaping of the behavior that distinguishes an effective teacher of English for non-native speakers from an ineffective one: the attitudes, the understandings, the skills, and the habits they have acquired either in their training or outside of it.

I would like to suggest a few items for each of the above categories gleaned from the literature related to this area that has poured out in the past few years.

1/ (Champaign, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1966), pp. 10-11.

They might be considered as basic educational objectives for the beginning teacher to attain to insure his maintaining strong morale and steady professional growth regardless of whether he is a native or non-native speaker of English.

Attitudes

Among the attitudes I would consider important for the beginning TESL to have in a multi-lingual community in the seventies are:

1. To believe that the phenomenal spread of English throughout the world can be made to bring about improved cross-culture and inter-group communication and ultimately a more stable and more civilized world.

2. To believe that a teacher of English to non-native speakers should develop interest in the languages or dialects and cultures of his students and that by doing so he will not only gain more understanding of their learning problems but also motivate them to follow his example with respect to English.

3. To believe that the language and culture of his students deserve high respect, that his students should be encouraged to cherish them, and that the new language behavior should be taught as a way of extending their range of communication and experience and achievement rather than as a way of eradicating previous behavior.

4. To believe that imaginative use of communications technology in extending and diversifying cross-culture interaction is an untapped area of great potential for the teacher to explore and to use in his teaching.

Understandings

Among the theoretical concepts useful for the teacher in a multi-lingual community that are proving to have generative as well as explanatory power are the following:

1. To understand that an important distinction between the non-native and the native speaker studying English is that the former is preparing himself primarily for cross-culture communication whereas the latter is trying to increase his competence in communicating with members of his own culture important to him.

2. To understand that the linguistic code is only one of the possible message systems used in human communication; that a culture is a complex of message systems which predispose its bearers to share certain features of outlook and behavior; and that these common ways of perceiving and behaving will cause members of one culture to interact with a particular feature of another culture in a characteristic way.

3. To understand that a particular kind of grammar, or system of describing a language, focuses on a characteristic set of language phenomena or behavior and that, therefore, one kind of grammar will serve better than another as a basis for the teaching of competence in a certain kind of language behavior.

4. To understand that the communication theory model in which a sender selects a message from an information source for a transmitter to encode into a signal to be sent over a channel to a receiver which decodes--to the extent that distortions or noise permit--and passes the message to the destination from which feed-back to the sender affects the selection and encoding of subsequent messages.is more appropriate for teaching competence in cross-culture communication in English for non-native speakers than traditional-Latinate grammar (which is most concerned with classifying individual words in written language); structural grammar (which is concerned primarily with describing phrase structure of spoken utterances), or generative-transformation grammar (which is concerned with how sentences are generated by, to quote Noam Chomsky[2]/

> "an ideal speaker-listener in a completely homogeneous speech-community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance."

5. To understand that directing students into meaningful cross-culture-interaction-situations as early as possible is important for motivating them to learn and for making them ultimately good cross-culture communicators.

Skills

Among the skills that a teacher of English to non-native speakers in a multi-lingual community should be taught are the following:

1. To be able to find and use contrastive analyses (structural or generative-transformational) of the languages of his students and English for the preparation of teaching materials designed to help his students overcome their most common learning problems.

2. To be able to use socio-linguistic analyses of variations in language behavior in cross-culture-interaction situations in his community in order to identify the situations he must prepare his students for.

2/ Aspects of the Theory of Syntax (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1965), p. 3.

3. To be able to select text materials for his classes that will help his students gain proficiency in mastering the code of English as it fits the particular cross-culture-interaction situations for which his students are preparing themselves.

4. To be able to compare features of the languages and cultures of his students with parallel ones in English-speaking communities and to identify significant cross-culture-interaction situations if there are no published descriptions for his community.

5. To be able to select and to teach his students to interact with literary texts suited for the level of his students' linguistic competence which will also give them insights into the problems of interaction between bearers of their own culture and bearers of particular English-speaking cultures.

6. To be able to involve his students in cross-culture interaction games, role-playing, or goal-seeking in the classroom and to make them aware of the structural aspects of the situations which they need to master in order to be competent in the behavior required.

7. To be able to select and organize real cross-culture-interaction activities appropriate for the background and needs of his students that will supplement their classroom work and involve them as soon as possible in real cross-culture cummunication, such as letter-writing for meaningful ends, programmed telephone conversation with informants from the target culture, tape-exchanges with members of the target culture, programmed in instruction, and language laboratory activities.

8. To be able to measure and evaluate proficiency, progress, or aptitude in his students' cross-culture communication skills and to be able to feedback the results of such evaluation into his teaching.

Habits

Among the habits that a prospective teacher of English to non-native speakers in a multi-lingual community should be encouraged to develop are the following:

1. To use every opportunity to interact unaffectedly as well as he can in the languages and cultures of his students so that they will see by his example that he respects their cultures and so that they will be motivated to interact in the target culture as much as possible.

2. To observe and file in his memory and his notebooks interesting features of cross-culture interaction behavior that he can bring to his students' attention in trying to give them competence in particular situations.

3. To be on the lookout for up-to-date cross-culture interaction situations in his casual reading that will deepen his understanding of how his students might perform in various kinds of cross-culture interaction.

The attitudes, understanding, skills, and habits I have listed as basic objectives to strive for in the training of TESLs for multi-lingual communities are only tentative suggestions. Some of you will want to give other objectives not specified here a higher priority. I hope most of you will accept the majority of them; and I hope, too, that if my basic design is not acceptable some of you will quickly propose another, for if we TESLs are ever to achieve real professional identity we must be able to draw some sort of profile of the TESL we might all want to try to become.

Once we think we see the profile we like in the mosaic of attitudes, understandings, skills, and habits we consider minimal for the beginning TESL in a multi-lingual community, the building of curricula from the mass of bibiiographies manuals, guidelines, textbooks, programs, slides, records, films, and videotapes now available; the staffing of faculties, and the allocating end equipping of classrooms can proceed systematically.

But in all this let us try to preserve in both the teacher-trainee and the end product some of the spirit that burned in the elderly student in Dickens' Bleak House.3/

" What are you doing here?" asked my guardian.

"Trying to learn myself to read and write," said Krook.

"And how do you get on?"

"Slow. Bad," returned the old man, impatiently. "It's hard at my time of life."

"It would be easier to be taught by someone," said my guardian.

"Ay, but they might teach me wrong!...I don't know what I may have lost by not being learned afore. I wouldn't like to lose anything by being learned wrong now."

"Wrong?" said my guardian..."Who do you suppose would teach you wrong?"

"I don't know, Mr. Jaundyce of Bleak House!" replied the old man...I don't suppose anybody would--but I'd rather trust my own self than another."

3/ (Garden City, N.Y.: Library Guild of America, Doubleday, 1953), pp. 128-129.

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